GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1969
ANSWERED ON:13.12.2004
DIVERSION OF FOODGRAIN
Kamat Shri Gurudas;Paswan Shri Ramchandra;Singh Shri Prabhunath

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether foodgrains meant for weaker sections are sold in the black market by the Fair Price Shops (FPS);

(b) if so, whether the Government has conducted any survey to identify such FPS;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) the action taken/proposed to be taken by the Government against FPS owners held responsible; and

(e) the steps taken to ensure that foodgrains reaches the targeted people?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH)

(a): In such a vast network of about 4.76 lakh Fair Price Shops (FPS) throughout the country, the possibility of such instances occurring cannot be ruled out.

(b): No, Sir.

(c): Does not arise.

(d) & (e): Under the Targetted Public Distribution System (TPDS), the supervision and monitoring the functioning of FPSs rests with the concerned State Governments/UTs. Streamlining the PDS in the country, making it more accessible to the poor and taking corrective steps is an on going process. However the following measures have been taken to strengthen the system and to ensure that foodgrains reaches the poor:

(i) The State Governments and the Union Territory Administrations have been asked to actively involve the Panchayati Raj Institutions to monitor the functioning of the Fair Price Shops, as a measure of social audit;

(ii) The States and Union Territories have also been asked to constitute Vigilance Committees on the PDS at the State, District, Block and FPS levels;

(iii) With a view to efficiently reaching PDS commodities to the consumers in a transparent manner, a model Citizens` Charter has been issued by the Central Government for adoption by the State Governments/UT Administrations;

(iv) In order to strengthen the hands of the State Governments, the Public Distribution System (Control) Order, 2001 has been issued on 31st August 2001 under section 3 of the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 with a view to curb willful adulteration, substitution, diversion etc. of the PDS commodities. An offence committed in violation of the provisions of the Order shall invoke criminal liability under the EC Act.